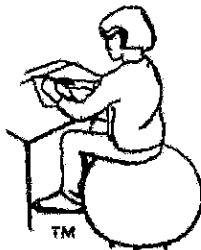
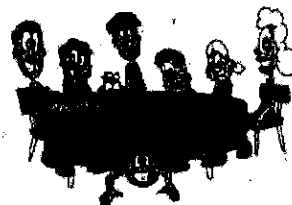
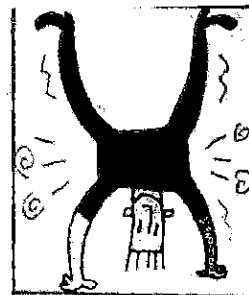


# Can't Sit Still

## PROBLEMS:

My child...

- slumps in her seat and lies on the table
- always seems to be wiggly and squirming when she is supposed to sit still
- constantly gets up out of her chair.



## GOALS:

- Detect your child's unique sensory preferences before and during 'sitting' activities
- Discover how movement may prepare your child for sitting
- Improve posture with dynamic sitting during eating and tabletop activities.

## SOLUTIONS:

### Step 1: Prior to quiet sitting

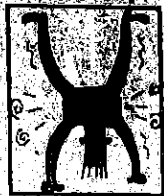
Children need good nutrition from food, and they also need sensory experiences for their body and brain. If your child has difficulty sitting still, she may need more movement experiences throughout the day or prior to sitting activities. As a parent, you can encourage and allow your child to move.

Some activities include ...

- up and down movements on a chair ball, trampoline or with a jump rope
- back and forth movements on a swing, in a rocking chair or stroller
- activities such as dancing, running, jumping, sliding, rolling
- helping with chores. See **HEAVY JOBS** for ideas.



# Can't Sit Still



## Step 2: During quiet sitting in a typical chair

If your child tends to wiggle or squirm in her seat, you may need to use a sensory strategy. Firm pressure touch (like a hug) tends to calm and quiet the body.

### Some strategies include ...

- wearing a heavy coat, weighted vest, or Bear Hug
  - putting something on her lap (book bag, lap tray, heavy pillow)
  - performing a heavy job intermittently throughout the activity.
- See **HEAVY JOBS**.



For additional activities, think about the...

### 7 categories

Hearing Seeing Touching Moving Smelling Muscles Mouth

For example:



A mother needs her small child to sit still in the grocery cart. She gives her child a box of raisins to eat while they shop. As you can see, several of the sensory categories listed above are involved. The box of raisins (which provides seeing, touching, smelling and mouth tools) helps her to sit still without becoming wiggly or fussy.

## Step 3: During quiet sitting on an unstable surface

Dynamic or active sitting on an unstable surface can provide your child with the little bit of additional movement she may need to maintain attention.

### Dynamic sitting prevents ergonomic casualties by ...

- challenging and supporting the spinal muscles of the back
- facilitating and training the body in an upright posture
- preventing uneven pressure on vertebral discs
- preventing constant one-sided strain
- promoting flexibility of the spine, joints and ligaments
- enhancing balance
- encouraging health and, over time, preventing postural deconditioning and back pain.

### Other dynamic sitting alternatives include ...

'T' stools, wedges and inflated disks. Each item varies in the type of input it provides. Together with your child, find which works best for her.

see The Ball Chair page in the *Tool Chest™* handbook

